

**PRESS RELEASE**

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**10 Central Mass Towns to Receive Assistance with Sustainable Development Projects**

[Worcester, Massachusetts] December 21st, 2017: On December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017, the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission (CMRPC) announced it is the recipient of five (5) grants intended to help communities plan for and implement Massachusetts' Sustainable Development Principles. The grants to CMRPC, which total \$180,000, were provided by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) *Planning Assistance Grants* program.

Launched in 2017, the EEA Planning Assistance Grants program seeks to encourage municipalities to implement land use regulations that are consistent with the Baker-Polito Administration's land conservation and development objectives including:

- Reduction of land, energy, and natural resource consumption
- Provision of sufficient and diverse housing
- Mitigation of/preparation for climate change

This award will enable CMRPC to provide ten (10) communities with technical expertise and undertake the public process associated with creating plans and adopting land use regulations. The award will support the following projects:

- Village Center Bylaws (Auburn, Upton, Holden, West Boylston, West Brookfield and Hopedale)
- Worcester Comprehensive Parking Zoning Ordinance Revision
- Rutland Residential Development Impact Analysis
- Sutton Housing Needs Study
- Blackstone Town Center Mixed-Use Zoning Analysis

According to Janet A. Pierce, Executive Director of CMRPC,

*The Planning Assistance Grants* program reflects a next-wave opportunity in sustainability planning. This generous grant will allow us to help ten (10) communities pursue sustainable development projects that, in many cases, are years in the making. For example, CMRPC recently assisted the Town of West Brookfield with its first-ever Master Plan. This funding will allow the Town to pursue a key recommendation of the plan: adoption of a village center bylaw. Through this bylaw, the Town will be able to shape its own development and ensure it grows in a healthy, resilient manner.

About CMRPC: Founded by the Legislature in 1963, CMRPC provides a variety of services to its constituencies and brings a regional perspective to planning and development. One of 13 Regional Planning Agencies in Massachusetts, CMRPC serves the City of Worcester and 39 surrounding communities in the southern two-thirds of Worcester County. CMRPC's programs include Transportation, Regional Services, Geographic Information Systems (GIS), and Community Development and Planning.

Municipalities seeking assistance with sustainable development goals are encouraged to contact Chris Ryan of the Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission, [cryan@cmrpc.org](mailto:cryan@cmrpc.org) or (508) 459-3315.

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